No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-7-4-28-9

AUG 5 1970

Dear Mac:

Thank you for your letter of July 10, following up our phone conversation on the economics of Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

I share your high regard for Gene Black and, pursuant to your suggestion, am attempting to arrange a meeting with him to discuss the economic problems of Southeast Asia and his views on the most effective ways of assisting that area. He does have a wealth of experience, which could be brought to bear on a number of problems we are currently dealing with.

I appreciated hearing your views on this subject and invite you to "bend my ear" on this or other issues in the future.

Best regards,

Henry A. Kissinger

Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Ford Foundation
320 East 43rd Street
New York, N. Y. 10017

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No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-7-4-28-9

No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-7-4-28-9

410

Dear Mr. Black:

In a recent talk on the subject of economics in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, Mac Bundy suggested that I might find it valuable to discuss with you a number of the problems which we are facing in that area. I believe that such a meeting would prove valuable, and would hope that we could get together when you are next in Washington.

If you agree, I would appreciate your calling my office to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Best regards,

Henry A. Kissinger

Mr. Eugene P. Black
American Express Company
65 Broadway
New York, New York 10006

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McGEORGE BUNDY
320 EAST 43RD STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017

July 10, 1970

Dear Henry:

It was nice of you to let me bend your ear about the economics of Southeast Asia and South Vietnam, and I really do hope that you will find a chance to talk with Gene Black. As I said on the phone, he is one of the most effective Washington operators that ever walked the corridors of Capitol Hill. He has proven friendships on both sides of the aisle and in both parts of each party.

Black was called into the Southeast Asia business by President Johnson at the time of the Baltimore speech in April, 1965. In other hands this might have been merely a propaganda exercise, but Black turned it into a real effort. He worked mainly in the regional field and not specifically on South Vietnam, and the Mekong River enterprise remains one of the most promising long-range hopes of the whole region. Moreover, some of its first undertakings are moving toward reality, and there is every reason for the United States to show a little more activity. But what runs through the back of my mind is something more immediately urgent -- namely the probable need to enlarge our economic support for Saigon as our military withdrawal increases. It ought not to be beyond the wit of man to package such economic reconstruction on a basis which is open-ended toward Hanoi, and justified as a matter of ten or twenty cents on the military dollar saved by withdrawal. But this is the sort of thing that Washington has never been organized to do in the past, and the best of plans from Cooper in Saigon will not turn into reality unless someone can get them through the Congress.

One last word about Black: he is a President's man in the classic mold. This has two consequences -- first, if he is wanted it must be the President who wants him; second, if he does sign on, the President will be able to count on service as loyal as it will be skillful.

As ever,

The Honorable Henry Kissinger
The White House
Washington, D. C.

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